

Message Text

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43

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 EB-07 PM-04 MC-02 OMB-01 AID-05

IGA-01 COME-00 TRSE-00 DODE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

SS-15 NSC-05 PRS-01 SAJ-01 L-03 /074 W

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R 111013Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4063

INFO AMCONGEN HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 23701

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: EGEN, PFOR, RO, US, VS

SUBJ: EXPORT OF AMERICAN EQUIPMENT FROM SOUTH VIET-NAM

REF: TWINING MEMCON OF JUL 30, 1975

SUMMARY: PRG AGREES TO EXPORT OF AMERICAN EQUIPMENT TO
HONG KONG. END SUMMARY.

1. ROMANIAN TRADE REPRESENTATIVE MINCULETE TOLD EMBASSY
OFFICER THAT HIS GOVERNMENT HAS JUST RECEIVED PERMISSION
FROM THE PRG TO GO AHEAD ON A PROPOSAL TO EXPORT ALL KINDS
OF AMERICAN EQUIPMENT--CRANES, BULLDOZERS, LARGE HERMES
TRANSPORTING EQUIPMENT, ETC.--NOW IN SOUTH VIET-NAM TO
HONG KONG. HE SAID THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE HAVE CONCLUDED
THAT, IN THE ABSENCE OF SPARE PARTS AND A REAL NEED FOR SUCH
A LARGE QUANTITY OF INDUSTRIAL EQUIPMENT NOW OR FOR THE
FEW YEARS, THEY WOULD DO BETTER TO SELL IT FOR A PROFIT
AT THIS TIME THAN TO KEEP IT SITTING IDLE.

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2. THE ROMANIAN ESTIMATE THAT THIS WILL BE A MULTI-

MILLION DOLLAR DEAL, PERHAPS REACHING AS HIGH AS FIVE HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS, OF WHICH THEY WILL RECEIVE A COMMISSION AS MIDDLEMEN. ONCE IT REACHES HONG KONG, THE EQUIPMENT WILL BE REPAIRED AND RESOLD.

3. NOW THAT ROMANIA HAS MADE THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS, THE GROUP WHICH WILL ACTUALLY HANDLE THE OPERATION IS A SPECIALLY CREATED PARTNERSHIP OF AN AMERICAN FIRM (MINCULETE WAS VERY CAREFUL NOT TO NAME IT) AND WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS THE LARGEST BRITISH METALS FIRM, SOUNDING LIKE BENTSON-SMITH. SOUTH VIET-NAM'S ONLY STIPULATION WAS THAT THE AMERICAN FIRM MUST NOT HAVE BEEN INVOLVED PREVIOUSLY IN VIET-NAM UNDER THE FORMER REGIME. (MINCULETE SAID HIS PEOPLE SUSPECT THAT THE U.S. FIRM MAY HAVE SIMPLY CHANGED ITS NAME.)

4. WITH PRG APPROVAL SECURED, THE NEXT STEP--BEING ORGANIZED FROM BUCHAREST--IS FOR A TEAM COMPOSED OF ROMANIANS AND REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE BRITISH AND AMERICAN FIRMS TO TRAVEL TO SAIGON. THERE, THEY WILL UNDERTAKE TO INSPECT ALL EQUIPMENT BEING CONSIDERED FOR EXPORT TO HONG KONG, ACCORDING TO THE SOURCE. HE PROMISED TO KEEP US INFORMED ON THE PROGRESS OF THE OPERATION.

5. COMMENT: EMBASSY OFFICER HAS MET MINCULETE SEVERAL TIMES AND HAS THE IMPRESSION HIS COMMENTS ARE RELIABLE.
WHITEHOUSE

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